

See also "Council," Nov. 12, 1926.

*Letter accompanying
this is in original
filed in 10/15/26*

ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW YORK CITY
Reports of the Committee on Organization
October 15, 1926

1. The Need - There is great need for a permanent organization in New York City to serve as a Clearing House for the various arts and to co-ordinate the activities of the many existing associations.
2. Purpose - The Arts Council of New York City is to be a permanent body to serve as a Clearing House for all the agencies in New York City which exist for the advancement of the Arts --- Music, Drama, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Crafts, Industrial Arts and other phases of cultural activities; to initiate activities not already cared for; to furnish authoritative information and guidance; to help secure more adequate educational facilities; and to offer wider opportunities for the production and enjoyment of all the Arts throughout the New York Region.

The Arts Council of New York City is not to be a new society but a center through which all can work without in any way interfering with the identity of any organization.

3. The Field - The opportunities for service are so vast that it is not possible to outline them fully but only to suggest the first steps. These include:
 - a. A central Clearing House to be established in the heart of the City with a professional staff
 - b. A survey, by Public School districts, of the cultural opportunities and the special artistic needs in each district of Greater New York and the adjoining region.
 - c. The formation of Community Arts groups in various sections of the City under the guidance of the central Clearing House -- the Branch Library idea carried into the arts.
 - d. Scientific vocational guidance for students who are considering any of the arts as their life work
4. The Methods - The name Arts Council of New York City has been adopted instead of Arts Foundation which was originally suggested.
 - a. Headquarters have been established at 25 West 43rd Street, room 1002A (telephone Murray Hill 4625). The rent has been guaranteed for one year and the salary of a stenographer assured for three months -- until January first, 1927.
 - b. The activities are to be under three Groups:
 1. Design
 2. Drama
 3. Music
 - c. Each Group will be composed of Representatives from the various organizations in the Group.
 - d. The Groups will name Delegates to the Governing Board of the Arts Council.
 - e. The budget for each of the three Groups for 1927 has been placed at \$10,000.
 - f. Steps are being taken toward securing the necessary financial support. Success, however, depends upon the endorsement of the plans by a large number of existing organizations.

COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION

For the National Academy of Design

*Herbert Adams
*Howard Russell Butler
F. Ballard Williams

For the Architectural League

Harvey W. Corbett
Eli J. Kahn
Alexander B. Trowbridge

For the Arts Council

John G. Agar
John H. Finley
Florence M. Levy.

*Out of town and therefore have not taken part in framing this report.

Date _____

WHEREAS there is great need for a permanent organization in New York City to serve as a Clearing House for the various arts and to co-ordinate the art activities of the many existing associations; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the _____ heartily endorsed the plan for an Arts Council of New York City to be devoted to the advancement of Music, Drama, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, the Crafts, Industrial Arts, and other cultural activities. And be it further

RESOLVED that the President is hereby authorized to appoint one Representative and one Alternate to attend meetings called by the Arts Council of New York City and to report back to this association. It is distinctly understood, however, that no financial obligations are incurred without further action by the _____.

RESOLVED that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the Arts Council of New York City at 25 West 43rd Street, room 1002A

TRUSTEES

JOHN G. AGAR
President
JOHN H. FINLEY
Vice-President
ERNEST K. SATTERLEE
Treasurer
OTTO H. KAHN
FLORENCE N. LEVY
HARVEY W. CORRETT
Chairman Design Group
MRS. JOHN W. ALEXANDER
Chairman Drama Group
KATE OGLEBAY
V. Chm. Drama Group

ARTS COUNCIL
OF NEW YORK CITY

25 WEST 43RD STREET
ROOM 1002 A

STAFF

FLORENCE N. LEVY
Executive Secretary
and
Director Design Group

Telephone
MURRAY HILL 4625

March 19, 1927

American Numismatic Society,
West 156 Street, New York.

Gentlemen:

We are enclosing for your information a brief summary of the Arts Council of New York, and the service it has been able to render since its inception in January, 1927.

Considerable interest and cooperation has been aroused, and the idea of a clearing house for the arts, seems to be most welcome.

Should you be able to use part of the material in your valued publications, we would appreciate it greatly.

Yours very truly

Helen Bannard Risdon
Helen Bannard Risdon
Public Relations Department

Helen Bannard Risdon
Arts Council of New York City
25 West 43rd Street, New York

In the City of New York, leaders in the arts and in education, have come to the realization that a clearing house for the arts, maintained through one central headquarters, where each existing art organization, small and large, may enjoy equal representation and equal opportunity of taking part in furthering the influence of the arts in every day living.

An Arts Council of New York City has been organized with a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees, including John G. Agar, John H. Finley, Ernest K. Satterlees, Mrs. John W. Alexander, Harvey Wiley Corbett, Hate Oglebay, Otto H. Kahn, and Florence N. Levy, who is also Executive Secretary. The Council is developing its work through the three great art Groups, - design, drama, and music.

The Design Group has been the first to organize within the Council, with Harvey Wiley Corbett as Chairman and Miss Levy as Director. An Advisory Board is composed of Alon Bement, Director of the Art Center; C. Paul Jennewein, sculptor; George K. Gombarts, Principal New York Free Evening Industrial Art School; Hardings Scholle, Director Museum of the City of New York; Leon Dabo, President Brooklyn Society of Artists, and Jean Willen, Women's Art School Cooper Union., representing fifty five organizations devoted to the arts of design.

An endowment fund is being created through gifts totalling not less than \$500,000; four-fifths of each gift being invested, -in the name of the donor if desired, - in perpetuity. The five year endowment plan is to be followed in which a gift of \$25,000 annually for a period of five years, would represent an investment of \$20,000 each year, with but \$5,000 being withdrawn from the gift for current expenses.

The Council hopes to touch the lives of the City's millions by taking the arts to the people, as the munificence of Mr. Carnegie carried the best in literature

into the communities of the average homes and families. Community art groups, or centers, properly organized and established, would accomplish a greater direct benefit within each local borough, than any other means of arousing a better understanding and an appreciation of the arts. Many of the large sections in the vast Metropolitan District where hundreds of thousands of families dwell, are without any adequate facilities for the presentation of exhibits, good drama, music, or lectures.

Lack of space is not the difficulty but rather the need for some medium through which the educational institutes, art societies, settlements and the public could work together in promoting a general community cooperation.

In the two months of its existence the Council has demonstrated its value as a purely educational medium for service. Its inception was largely due to the initiative of the National Academy of Design and the Architectural League of New York.

At the request of the Mother's Club of Public School No. 6, it was instrumental in crystallizing a movement to have the unused classrooms equipped for studio and art classes. The school is located near the Metropolitan Museum of Art. At the request of the Fine Arts Federation of New York, it obtained action from its affiliated organizations in forwarding resolutions and personal letters to Governor Smith, urging that the State Fine Arts Commission be retained in its present form.

The series of lectures on 'Art in Every Day Life' organized by the Council, and given by Gerrit A. Beneker, portrait painter of the laborer, reached nearly six thousand people, in twenty lectures during the one month of February, 1927, by requests from private and public schools, shop teachers, museums, social organizations, and societies, who wished to learn of the influence art has come to bear in relation to industry and business.